

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding the High Capacity Well Inventory

General Questions About High Capacity Wells and DNR Request for Updated Well Information:

1. **What is a high capacity well?** A high capacity well is any well on a high capacity property. A high capacity property is one property that has or will have one or more wells with a combined capacity of 70 gallons per minute (gpm) or more. The capacity for each well is determined by the rated maximum capacity of the pump installed in the well, or the rate that the well flows at if it is a flowing well. The total capacity of all wells on the property is used to determine whether or not the wells are high capacity wells. Thus, in some cases residential wells are high capacity wells, even if every well on the property has a capacity of less than 70 gpm.
2. **Why is the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) requesting that high capacity well owners update their high capacity well information at this time?** Starting in 2007, high capacity well owners will be responsible for measuring or estimating how many gallons are pumped (pumpage) during each month from each of their high capacity wells. The DNR must update records of well ownership so that the DNR can mail information to the correct well owners about these future requirements. In early 2007, the DNR will mail information to well owners on how to estimate or measure pumpage and how that information is to be reported to the DNR.
3. **Why will the DNR require that high cap well owners start submitting pumpage information in 2007?** The high capacity well law that took effect in 2004 (2003 Act 310) requires that the DNR collect this information from well owners so that the State can monitor the groundwater resource. This data is expected to be used for regional water planning purposes. The DNR previously collected this information but stopped collecting it after 1989 due to legislative action at that time.
4. **When I start submitting pumpage information in 2007, will there be a fee?** No, the only high capacity well fee will be the fee that is already in place, an application fee for constructing a new high capacity well or wells.

Questions About Property Ownership and Well Operator:

5. **I own several different parcels. Are the properties on each side of the road separate high capacity properties?** The high capacity property is all adjoining parcels under single ownership. Parcels that are bisected by roads or railroads are considered to be adjoining parcels and part of the same high capacity property.
6. **What is the difference between the well owner and well operator?** Usually the well owner and operator are the same person or business, but some owners lease land with high capacity wells to someone else to operate. The well operator may collect and submit pumpage information on behalf of the owner. But, the owner of the property is responsible for the wells and for insuring that pumpage information will be reported.
7. **I sold part of my property that had a well on it. My remaining wells no longer have a total capacity of 70 or more gpm. What do I do?** Complete and return the inventory. You should request to have your property reclassified so that it no longer is a high capacity property. This way you will not have to report pumpage data every year. Contact the DNR at (608) 266-3484 or (608) 266-7093 for additional information.
8. **I sold property with a well on it to someone else, but I still have a total pumping capacity of over 70 gpm on the property. What information do I provide to the DNR now?** Complete your inventory and return it. If you know the name and address of the current owner of the property that you sold, write it on the inventory form next to that well or wells. If you do not know, state that. The DNR will contact the new owner or attempt to find out who the new owner is.

Questions About Pumping Capacity and Maximum Daily Usage:

9. **I replaced the pump in my well with a smaller pump. What information do I provide to the DNR at this time?** The information in this packet lists the maximum *approved* pumping capacity. You may use a smaller pump than was approved, but please include a comment on the form when you mail it back to the DNR that indicates that you currently are using a smaller pump. Your *approved* pumping capacity will not be reduced unless you submit a request.
10. **I replaced the pump in my well with a smaller pump and now the total pumping capacity on the high capacity property is less than 70 gallons per minute. What information do I provide to the DNR at this time?** Complete the inventory and return it. If you do not want to report pumpage data, you may request to have your property reclassified so that it no longer is a high capacity property. If however you might wish to install a larger pump later that would again make your property a high capacity property, you might not want to make such a request at this time. That is because if you apply to convert your property to a high capacity property later, you would have to pay the application fee for a new application. Contact the DNR at (608) 266-3484 or (608) 266-7093 for additional information.

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding the High Capacity Well Inventory (Continued)

11. **I replaced the pump in my well with a bigger pump. What information do I provide to the DNR at this time?** Complete and return the inventory. The information in this packet lists the maximum *approved* pumping capacity. If a licensed pump installer installed a pump that is larger than the maximum *approved* pumping capacity, please advise the DNR of the actual installed pump capacity, the name of the pump installer and the approximate date of installation. You may have to apply for approval for an increase in approved pumping capacity or you may have to hire a pump installer to install a smaller pump. Contact the DNR at (608) 266-3484 or (608) 266-7093 for additional information.
12. **I use a lot less water than the approved average or maximum daily usage. What do I do?** The information in this packet lists the maximum *approved* daily usage rates. You may use less than you are approved to use. If you have an accurate estimate of the average daily usage, please provide that. But the DNR does not anticipate reducing the maximum *approved* daily use rate, so there is no need for you to change this number.

Questions About Corrections to the Information on the Form:

13. **Where does the information on the High Capacity Well Inventory sheet come from?** The information comes from the DNR's database of high capacity wells, which is based on the approvals that were issued for these wells.
14. **If information on the High Capacity Well Inventory form needs to be corrected, where should I put the corrected information?** Put a line through the incorrect information and write the corrections next to it. Please do not white out, cover, or otherwise obliterate the incorrect information so it can no longer be read.
15. **What is the difference between "active," "inactive" or "abandoned"?** When a high capacity well is initially approved, it is classified as "**active**". Once the well is permanently sealed as specified in NR812, the term "**abandoned**" is used. Any wells that are listed as abandoned in the DNR database are not included in your Well Inventory form. However, if a well was abandoned and DNR high capacity well personnel were never informed, the well is included in your inventory. If a well was taken out of service or proposed to be replaced, that well may be listed as "**inactive**" in your inventory. If a well listed on your inventory was temporarily sealed, you may call it inactive and check that box.
16. **What if I only use my well infrequently or not on a regular basis?** Even if a well is only used occasionally or seasonally, it is still considered to be an active well. Examples of infrequently used wells might include some irrigation wells or wells that serve campgrounds or seasonally occupied dwellings. A well that has been taken out of service must be sealed (abandoned) in accordance with the well code within three years. If you have a well that has been taken out of service more than three years ago, you should contact a well driller or pump installer and have the well abandoned.
17. **If the High Capacity Well Inventory Sheet lists a well or wells that I do not know anything about, what should I do?** A prior owner probably received approval to install the well. If the well was installed and later taken out of service, the well may or may not have been properly sealed (abandoned is the term used in the well code). If you have absolutely no knowledge of the well, please note that next to the well on the inventory. If you have any information about where the well might be located and/or whether it was properly sealed, please indicate that on the inventory. The DNR may call you with additional questions about the well or wells at a later date.
18. **What if information under the Well Information section of the High Capacity Well Inventory sheet is blank?** Blank spaces mean that the DNR database information is incomplete. Please provide any information that you have, but if you have no additional information, leave it blank.
19. **How are "common" well names, and owner and operator well numbers assigned?** Well names, and owner and operator well numbers were assigned at the time the approval was issued. If you wish to change any of these names or numbers, you may.
20. **What is the High Capacity Well Inventory Additions form for?** For various reasons, sometimes owners have wells on their property that the DNR is not aware of, or are otherwise not listed in the DNR's database. All such wells that do not appear on the High Capacity Well Inventory sheet should be recorded on the Additions sheet. If the well was previously approved for a different owner, you should list the approval date, if known. If it was not previously approved or you do not know if it was previously approved, leave the approval date blank. As noted above, any well on a high capacity property is a high capacity well, thus you should include any wells pumping less than 70 gallons per minute.
21. **Should I include additional paperwork with my inventory, i.e. abandonment forms, letters, supporting documentation with my edited well inventory?** You may include well abandonment forms or well construction records but do not include any other additional documentation with your returned inventory. We may be contacting some well owners in the future if we feel follow-up is required. However, we do encourage well owners to include notes or comments in the margins of the well inventory to make us aware of additional information.